

Amendments to the Claims:

This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-25 (canceled).

26. (new) A method for updating system software for a network apparatus in a network to which are connected a plurality of network apparatuses, the method comprising:

connecting one network apparatus to the network to acquire system information from other network apparatus, the system information including system component information and software version information about system software installed in the system component;

acquiring system component identification and software version information from at least one system update module;

selecting the system update module for installing a different version of the system software; and

updating the system software to the different version at each system component.

27. (new) A method as in claim 26 wherein the different version of the system software comprises a version of the system software with a date closest to when the step of updating is performed.

28. (new) A method as in claim 26 wherein:

the system information further includes apparatus function information describing functionality of hardware and software in the system component;

the system update module further includes compatibility information about the hardware and software; and

the step of updating system software to the different version includes consideration of the compatibility information.

29. (new) A method as in claim 26 wherein:

the system update module also contains information for acquiring a different version of the system software from a system update module coupled to an external network;
and

the different version of the system software is acquired from the system update module coupled to the external network.

30. (new) A method as in claim 26 wherein the system software in the system component includes a plurality of software elements, the different version changes only some of the system software elements, and the system update module includes compatibility information between different versions and the software elements.

31. (new) A method as in claim 26 wherein whenever a new network apparatus is connected to the network, the method for updating system software is performed.

32. (new) A method as in claim 26 wherein:

the system information in each network apparatus includes a last update date and time when the different version was installed; and

if the network includes at least two network apparatuses capable of executing the method for updating system software, then the network apparatus having a most recent update date and time is designated as a manager to execute the method for updating system software.

33. (new) A method as in claim 26 wherein the system update module includes an explanation statement about its contents, and the method further includes:

displaying the explanation statement to a user to allow the user to determine whether an update is to be performed by using the system update module.

34. (new) A network apparatus in a network system in which a network connects a plurality of the network apparatuses wherein:

system information is acquired from each of the network apparatuses connected to the network, the system information including system component identification information and version information of system software installed in each of the network apparatuses;

system component identification information and version information of system update modules are acquired from system update modules, the system update modules operating under control of the network apparatuses and being used for updating system software of network apparatuses;

update data necessary for revising system software of each network apparatus connected to the network is obtained by using the system component identification information and the version information of the system update modules; and

the update data is used to revise the system software installed in at least one of the network apparatuses.

35. (new) A network apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the system software in one of the network apparatuses is updated to a current version using the system update modules.

36. (new) A network apparatus according to claim 34 wherein:
the system information includes apparatus function information describing hardware and software functions of each network apparatus;
the system update module includes compatibility information about hardware and software; and
the update data used for a network apparatus includes reference to the apparatus function information.

37. (new) A network apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the system update module comprises a removable storage medium.

38. (new) A network apparatus according to claim 34 wherein the system update module includes information for acquiring a newer system update module from an external network, and the system update module on the external network is used to provide the update data for the system software.